

**STINGING FORK FALLS POCKET WILDERNESS
CLASS II NATURAL-SCIENTIFIC STATE NATURAL AREA**

COUNTY: Rhea

7.5' QUADRANGLE: Pennine

PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE: Cumberland Plateau

OWNERSHIP: Bowater

ACREAGE: 104 Acres

YEAR DESIGNATED: 1973

DESCRIPTION: Stinging Fork Falls Pocket Wilderness is a 104-acre natural area located in Rhea County. It is owned and managed by Bowater Incorporated. It is named after the 30 ft. waterfall located within the Stinging Fork gorge. The creek waters slide over the fan shaped falls, then quickly slip through chutes, and tumble over cascades below the falls. The gorge contains a 60- year old second growth mixed mesophytic forest community. Seep cliffs may be found along the smaller bluffs that descend into the gorge. A oak-pine forest can be found along the gorge bluff. Indian Head Point provides a view of the gorge and creek 160 feet below. Much of the upland in the area surrounding the access trail is planted loblolly pine. The access trail is outside of the natural area. A future segment of the Cumberland Trail is planned to cross Stinging Fork.

SITE MANAGEMENT: Bowater Forest Products Division, Calhoun Woodlands Operations, 5020 Highway 11 South, Calhoun, TN 37309, phone (423) 336-7205. Division of Natural Heritage, 401 Church Street, 14th Floor L&C Tower, Nashville, TN 37243-0447, phone (615) 532-0431.

PUBLIC ACCESS: Public access is allowed; parking and a 3-mile hiking trail is provided. The natural area is operated as a Bowater Pocket Wilderness Area.

DIRECTIONS: Stinging Fork Falls is located west of Spring City. Access to the natural area is via Highway 68. In spring City turn onto Shut-In Gap Road and proceed 5 miles to the parking area which is on the right.